IN THE CLAIMS

Please add new claims 29-32 as follows:

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for facilitating interactive voting over a computer network whereby voters use the computer network to transmit votes to a server in response to a survey question, comprising:

receiving votes at the server in response to the survey question;

providing a Live Event Object residing on the server that maintains persistent connections between the Live Event Object and a database;

caching the votes received in a memory cache using the Live Event Object;

tabulating in memory the cached votes accumulated over a predefined time interval to generate intermediate voting results ~~at specified intervals and~~

~~sending~~ writing the intermediate voting results to the database; and

computing a final voting result to the survey question ~~in real-time~~ using the cached votes.

2. (Original) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method recited in claim 1.

3. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the Live Event Object is resident in computer memory on the server.

4. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the Live Event Object establishes and maintains at least three persistent connections.

5. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the persistent connections include a raw vote cast by each of the voters.

6. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the persistent connections include current voting results obtained using the cached votes.

7. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 4, wherein the interactive voting is in response to the survey question asked during a live event and the persistent connections include a definition of the live event.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising tabulating the intermediate voting results to compute final voting results.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in claim 9, further comprising tabulating the intermediate voting results continuously to compute final voting results in real time.

11. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising creating the survey question.

12. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 11, further comprising defining an event in which the survey question is asked and checking a validity of the survey question and the event definition to ensure accuracy.

13. (Original) The method as set forth in claim 11, further comprising determining whether there has been a new survey question created and, if so, then updating the database.

14. (Previously Presented) An interactive voting system using a computer network, comprising:

a server in communication with the computer network for receiving voting data from voters in response to a polling question presented to the voters;

an object residing in memory on the server for caching at least some of the voting data and tabulating the cached voting data for a predefined time interval to compute an intermediate voting result, wherein the object is a non-relational object; and

a database having a connection with the object that receives and writes the cached voting data.

15. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 14, wherein the object is a Live Event Object containing at least some of the voting data as well as procedures and instructions for manipulating at least some of the voting data.

16. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 14, further comprising tabulating a final voting result using the intermediate voting result.

17. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 16, wherein the final voting result is tabulated in real time.

18. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 14, further comprising a persistent connection between the object and the database that is established and maintained by the object.

19. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 18, wherein the persistent connection further comprises at least three persistent connections.

20. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 14, further comprising an authoring system that enables a user to define an event and create polling questions associated with the event for distribution to the voters.

21. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 20,, wherein the authoring system further comprises a staging component that copies the event definition and polling questions to the database.

22. (Previously Presented) An interactive voting system that uses a computer network to process voting data, comprising a Live Event Vote Server in communication with the computer network, a Live Event Object residing in memory on a Live Event Vote Server, the Live Event Object receiving and caching voting data from a client in communication with the computer network, tabulating the cached voting data to generate intermediate voting results, and transferring the intermediate voting results to a Live Event Database through persistent connections between the Live Event Object and the Live Event Database such that the intermediate voting results are used to compute final voting results in real-time.

23. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 22, further comprising a vote cache that receives and caches at least some of the voting data from the Live Event Object.

24. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 23, further comprising a Live Event Vote Processor that tabulates the cached voting data from the vote cache to generate the intermediate voting results.

25. (Previously Presented) The interactive voting system as set forth in claim 24, wherein the Live Event Vote Processor tabulates the intermediate voting results to compute a final voting result in real time.

26. (Previously Presented) In a computer network having a plurality of clients and a server, a computer-implemented method for providing interactive voting over a computer network, comprising:

transmitting voting data from the plurality of clients to the server;

providing an object resident in memory on the server that contains procedures and instructions for manipulating the voting data;

tabulating in memory cached voting data to generate intermediate voting results at specified intervals;

writing the intermediate voting results to a database;

establishing and maintaining a persistent connection between the object and the database to facilitate writing of the intermediate voting results; and

using the intermediate voting results in the database to tabulate a final voting result.

27. (Original) The computer-implemented method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the persistent connection comprises at least three persistent connections.

28. (Previously Presented) The computer-implemented method as set forth in claim 26, further comprising caching the cached voting data in a vote cache.

29. (New) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising writing each of the received votes to the database to allow cross-tabulation of demographic data.

30. (New) The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the predefined time interval is approximately fifteen seconds.

31. (New) The method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising:

tabulating in memory a plurality of the intermediate voting results written to the database such that the final voting results are updated; and

writing the updated final voting results to the database.

32. (New) The method as set forth in claim 31, further comprising updating the final voting results approximately every ten seconds.